

THE
DESCRIPTION

OF

EPSOM,

WITH THE

HUMORS and POLITICKS
of the Place:

IN A

LETTER

TO

EUDOXIA.

Quid quaeris? vivo & regno. HOR.

There is added
A Translation of Four Letters out of Pliny,

LONDON:

Printed for A. BALDWIN in *Warwick-Lane,*
1711. Price 6 d. *ab.*

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39
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First printed & sold by the Author.
Hor.



A translation of the letters out of Pliney.

LONDON:

Printed by A. Baldwin in Newgate-Street.
1704.

The Publisher to the Reader.

Of late years there have been printed several Descriptions of particular places in a jocular manner, in order to introduce such characters as might excite laughter only, without designing any sort of instruction, and yet often missing of this merry aim. But hearing the Description of EPSOM was a serious thing, I procur'd a copy of it from one of the Author's friends, who told me it was written to oblige two very eminent persons. The first is a Lady who really wanted to be inform'd of the place, and whom he wanted to inform about our Divisions. The second is a Gentleman, that, for some reasons, was desirous to see the Author write in a manner different from his ordinary stile, in a strain he did not approve himself, and which is scarce ever allow'd by good judges, but only in the descriptions of Places.

Except-

Excepting therefore in some passages the advantage of the Writer's expression, which may be compar'd to the coloring of a Painter, I, that know EPSOM very well, do averr it to answer the character he gives of it in every particular, and that no historical account can be more severely exact. If in any other part there lies a secret meaning (as is usual in political letters) 'tis more than I know; and therefore I publish it to all the world, with the same view that I conceive he wrote it for his two friends.

THE

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THE
DESCRIPTION
OF
EPSOM.

MADAM,

Epsom, May 30. 1711.

Since the Place in which I pass the summer was thought fit, on a certain occasion you remember, to be compar'd with my Mistress, who makes it summer wherever she is; you desire, that as I shew'd you the picture of the one, I wou'd likewise send you the description of the other; and as like the original as may be. The right you have to every thing that is mine, makes this request a command: and therefore without any further difficulty or apology (ceremonies inconsistent with rural simplicity) be pleas'd to receive it as

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taken from the life at one sitting. But the performance is not so easy in the manner, as the promise of a thing. I am not ignorant, that you think correctness and elegance of stile as necessary to set off the plainest truth, as neatness of dress and politeness of manners are to recommend the most beautiful woman: a flatteringly negligence, or a tawdry affectation, being no less disgusting in the one than in the other. Yet as there are several sorts of beauties, each having their peculiar charms, it is just so with writing. You know (without being one of those they call Virtuoso-Ladies) that there's the low and the sublime, the epistolary, the historical, the oratorical stile, with many other such differences. And in this Letter I fancy you'll easily agree, the stile ought to be a little luxuriant, like the subject it self. Nay, you have enjoind me as a task, to be rather turgid than simple in a piece of serious Amusement, where,

you

you say, I ought to show my self more a Poet than a Historian, yet still keeping close to the truth of the latter. Besides, that even unerring Nature puts on her gayest apparel in May, and teaches us her children, by the example of the trees, of the plants, of the birds, and of every object that presents it self to our senses, to delight in the same innocent Variety; particularly in prospects, landshapes, and the descriptions of extraordinary places, such as I am now going to do my self the honor of sending you.

EPSOM, a village in the county of Surry, much frequented for its most healthy Air and excellent mineral Waters, is distant about fourteen Italian miles from London-bridge, and twelve from Fox-hall. It is deliciously situated in a warm even bottom, between the finest Downs in the world on the one side (taking their name from the village of Ban-

sted seated on their very ridge) and certain clay-hills on the other side, which are variously chequer'd with woods and groves of oak, ash, elm, and beech, with both the poplars, the intoxicating yew, and the florid white-beam. The wyche-tree, the horn-beam, and the correcting birch are not wanting. I need not mention the numberless copses of hazel, thorn, holly, maple, and other trees and shrubs of dwarfish growth, that agreeably diversify all this country: nor that, for the most part, they are amorously claspt in the twining embraces of Ivy and Hony-suckles. The Downs, being cover'd with grass finer than Persian carpets, and perfum'd with wild Thyme and Juniper, run thirty miles in length, tho under different appellations, from Croydon to Earnham: and for sheep-walks, rideing, hunting, raceing, shooting, with games of most sorts for exercise of the body or recreation of the mind,
and

and a perpetual chain of villages within a mile or less of each other beneath, they are no where else to be parallel'd. The form of this our village, as seen from thence, is exactly semicircular; beginning with a Church, and ending with a Palace: or, lest our stile here shou'd offend you (MADAM) it has a Palace for its head, and a Church for its tail; Mr. WHISTLER's far-conspicuous grove making, as it were, a beautiful knot in the middle. EPSOM never misses of the eastern or the western Sun, and is about a mile in length; the area, within the bending of the bow or half-moon, being a spacious plain of corn-fields opening to the Downs. To these ever-green mountains of Chalk you may out of every house insensibly ascend, without as much as a hedge to obstruct the air or the passage. Indeed the Risings are many times so easy, that you find your self got to the top, without perceiving that you mounted. From the circumference

ference of the semicircle there branch out two or three pleasant Lanes, being the extremities of the roads which lead to the town from the slow declivities of the neighbouring hills. These are prefer'd to the principal street by such as are lovers of silence and retirement; and are known by the names of Clay-Hill, New-Inn-Lane, and Woodcot-Green, in which last place your humble servant has his Hermitage. There are other Allees and Outlets of meaner note. Among them I don't reckon the Avenue leading up the hill to Durdans, the Palace I just now mention'd; nor yet Hudson's-Lane, which I remember for the sake of Epsom-Court, that antient Saxon seat (long since converted into a farm) the mother and original of our subject. Now, all these By-places are so separated from each other by fields, meadows, hedge-rows, plantations, orchards, and the like, that they seem to be so many distinct little villages, uniting
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into one considerable town at the large street, in the middle of which stands the Watch-house. Several persons, who have chosen this sweet place for their constant abode, are distinguish'd from the rest by their habitations, as they are either by their birth or fortunes. But the houses of the very Townsmen are every where mighty neat, built most of 'em after the newest manner, and extremely convenient, being purposely contriv'd for the entertainment of Strangers, and therefore beautify'd by the owners to the utmost of their ability. The fronts are adorn'd throout with rows of elm or lime-trees, in many places artificially wreath'd into verdant Porticos, cut into variety of figures, and close enough wrought to defend those, who sit under such hospitable shades, from the injuries of the sun and the rain. Here sometimes breakfast and supper are taken, as at other times a chearful glass and a pipe: for these vegetable Canopies, in the
very

very heat of the day, yield a grateful and refreshing coolness, by the fanning breezes they collect from the delicate air of the Downs. The finest of 'em all is that which shades the pav'd Terrass in the centre of the town, extended quite along before the chief Tavern and Coffee-house. By the conversation of those, who walk there, you wou'd fancy your self to be this minute on the Exchange, and the next minute at St. James's; one while in an East-India factory or a West-India plantation, and another while with the army in Flanders or on board the fleet in the Ocean. Nor is there any profession, trade, or calling, that you can miss of here, either for your instruction or for your diversion. Behind the houses are handsom tho not large Gardens, generally furnish'd with pritty walks, and planted with variety of sallads and fruit-trees; which in several of 'em are all left free for the Lodgers. Such as neglect their gardens, find their

their error in the emptiness of their rooms. Thus when you are on the top of the Downs, 'tis one of the loveliest prospects imaginable, to view in the vale below such an agreeable mixture of trees and buildings, that a stranger is at a loss to know (as it has been observ'd of my beloved city Leyden in Holland) whether it be a town in a wood, or a wood in a town. One thing is wanting, and happy is the situation that wants no more ! For in this place (notwithstanding the medicinal Waters, and sufficient of sweeter for domestic use) are not to be heard the precipitant murmurs of impetuous cascades; there are no purling streams in our groves to temper the shrill notes of the warbling choristers, whose never-ceasing concerts exceed Bononcini and Corelli: the woods are not frequented by the unhappy, that they may listen to the soft whispers of some gentle rivulet to beguile and mitigate their cares ;

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the vallies are not divided by the curling waves, and sporting whirlpools of rapid rivers; neither are the flowry meads refresh'd by gliding meanders, cool bubling springs, or stagnant lakes. I leave you to guess, whether in these periods I design'd to show how well read I am in bombast-romance, or rather to exhibit the various images under which Water naturally delights us in the country. Ewell, an antient market-town within a short mile, has a most plentiful Spring, the head of a crystal brook; capable, were it here, to furnish a thousand ornaments and conveniences. And I am perswaded from physical reasons, that the digging of a trench about four or five foot deep, for a quarter of a mile (along the rivulet over Epsomcourt-meadows) from the now-uncertain springs in Church-street, wou'd quickly produce a stream, that in three quarters of a mile further shou'd fall in with the other, and give it the more dignify'd name

name of Epsom-river. But this present defect (for I augurate an approaching remedy) is amply recompens'd by every thing besides. The two rival Bowling-greens are not to be forgot, on which all the company by turns, after diverting themselves in the morning according to their different fancies, make a gallant appearance every evening (especially on Mondays) musick playing most of the day, and dancing sometimes crowning the night. The Ladies, to show their innate inclination to variety, are constantly tripping from one green to the other; and the Men are not more sure to follow 'em, than glad of the occasion, to excuse their own no less propensity to change. Here the British beauties, like so many animated stars, shine in their brightest lustre; not half so much by their precious jewels and costly apparel, as by the more pointed glories of their eyes. Here every old man wishes himself young again, and the heart of every

youth is captivated at once and divided between a thousand deserving charms. A fairer circle was never seen at Baia or Cuma of old, nor of late at Carels-bad or Aix-la-chapelle, than is to be admird on the High-green and in the Long-room, on a publick day. If the German baths outnumber us in Princesses, we outshine 'em in Nymphs and Goddesses, to whom their Princes wou'd be proud to pay adoration. But not to dissemble any thing, bountiful Nature has likewise provided us with other faces and shapes, I may add, with another set of dress, speech, and behaviour (not to mention age); ordain'd to quench the cruel flames, or to damp the inordinate desires, which the young, the handsom, and the accomplished, might undesignedly kindle: so necessary is an antidote to Love, where the disease is so catching and so fatal! In the Raffle-shops are lost more hearts than guineas, tho Cupid be no where so liberal

ral as in England. And the greatest
 order, that in such cases can be ex-
 pected (however to me it be a rout)
 is preserv'd at the Gaming-tables of
 every kind, where it is very divert-
 ing for a stender by to observe the
 different humors and passions of
 both sexes, which discover them-
 selves with less art and reserve at
 play, than on any other occasion.
 There you'll see a sparkish young
 fellow of twenty-five, sitting right
 over a blooming beauty of eigh-
 teen, but so intent on gain and the
 dice, that he never exchanges a
 word or a look with her: while a
 little lower you may smile at an old
 hunk, that loves his money as well
 as any in the city, yet losing it as
 fast as he plays, by having his eyes
 wholly off his cards, and fixt on a
 green girl of thirteen, that cares as
 little for any man there, as he does
 for his wife at home. The rude, the
 fullen, the noisy, and the affected,
 the peevish, the covetous, the libe-
 rous,

gious, and the sharpening, the proud, the prodigal, the impatient, and the impertinent, become visible foils to the well-bred, prudent, modest, and good-humour'd, in the eyes of all impartial beholders. Our Doctors, instead of prescribing the waters for the vapors or the spleen, order their patients to be assiduous at all public meetings; knowing that (if they be not themselves of the number) they'll find abundant occasion to laugh at bankrupt fortune-hunters, crazy or superannuated beaus, marry'd coquets, intriguing prudes, richly-drest waiting maids, and complimenting footmen. But being convinc'd (MADAM) that you dislike a malicious insinuation, as much as you approve an instructive hint, I abstain from all particular characters; sparing even those, who spare none but themselves. From this account it is plain we are not quite in Heaven here, tho we may justly be said to be in Paradise: a place cohabited

bited by innocence and guilt, by folly and fraud, from the beginning. The judicious EUDOKA will naturally conclude, that such a concourse of all ranks of people, must needs fill the shops with most sorts of useful and substantial wares, as well as with finer goods, fancies, and toys. The Taverns, the Inns, and the Coffee-houses answer the resort of the place. And I must do our Coffee-houses the justice to affirm, that for social virtue they are equal'd by few, and exceeded by none, tho I wish they may be imitated by all. A Tory does not stare and leer when a Whig comes in, nor a Whig look sour and whisper at the sight of a Tory. These distinctions are laid by with the winter suit at London, and a gayer easier habit worn in the country. Religion, that was design'd to calm, does not ruffle mens tempers by irreligious wranglings: nor dos our moderation appear by rude invectives against persons we do

do not know, no more than our
 charity does consist in fixing odious
 characters ~~on~~ ^{on} ~~such~~ ^{such} as unwillingly
 differ from us. But, if at any time
 we must needs deal in extremes, then
 we prefer the quiet good-natur'd Hy-
 pocrite to the implacable turbulent
 Zealot of any kind. In plain terms,
 we are not so fond of any set of No-
 tions, as to think 'em more impor-
 tant than the Peace of Society. Canst
 be those Priests and Politicians (as
 they are sure to fall sooner or later a
 victim to good sense) who so in-
 dustriously propagate Discord and In-
 humanity in Britain! while in Hol-
 land (for example) tho they differ,
 as all men must unavoidably do, in
 their sentiments of many things in
 Religion, and that they have oppo-
 site interests in the state; yet this is
 so far from exasperating, that it
 renders them more remarkably civil,
 as the certainest means to gain on each
 others persuasion, or at least on their
 good opinion. They are not brand-
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ed there for their Creeds, nor their Faith ridiculously solicited with promises of favor or preferment; which wou'd be an infallible method to bring all persons void of honor or conscience to make an open profession of their national Religion, and then (what's worst of all) to cover their insincerity with the furious pretext of Zeal. Private advantage (believe me) but not the fear of God or the love of man, is the adequate, the true, the only source both of Hypocrisy and Persecution: for a real persuasion is as far from needing any such interested baits, as an aversion to mens persons for the sake of their opinions is from being a mark of judgment or grace. Neither Ecclesiastical savageness, nor Political enthusiasm, follow these our best Allies from the Coffee-house to the Tavern, nor from the Exchange to their own Tables, no, nor even to Church it self: and the man, of what color or profession soever, wou'd be coun-

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red

ted no less unmannerly than strangely assuming, that shou'd prescribe to another what company he ought to keep. His own after that wou'd be no longer coveted, nor indeed easily admitted. And I doubt not but some such magisterial sawciness of old, was the original of a present wise custom, which makes it scandalous for a sort of men (I will not name out of respect) to be seen in Taverns or Coffee-houses. This makes all people easy. No Dictators, no Informers. The Dutch (in a word) are so intermixt and intermarry'd, that you can never guess at their Sect or Party by publick conversation; and, to do it, you must follow a man to his chappel or to his closet: for all promiscuous discourses on these subjects, are manag'd with the same cheerfulness and indifference, that they do any other topicks. If we must needs emulate the Dutch, for heaven sake let's do it in these laudable respects, and not foolishly

foolishly damn 'em for being more industrious than our selves. O in this unhappy, tho in all things else most happy, Britain! when wilt thou have a double return of that glorious spirit, that acted thee at the old Reformation or the late Revolution? brave without blood, asserting Liberty without falling into Licentiousness, and making the Laws a superior as well as a common rule to Prince and People. O CAMBRIDGE! O OXFORD! (he that hath ears to hear, let him hear) to you we fly for refuge, from you we expect a remedy, 'tis you only can allay our bigotry and heal our divisions. By the divine influence of the one, and the dextrous management of the other, first, let those degenerate Whigs become the scorn of their own party and of all mankind, that, under I know not what pretence, betray'd the Limitations upon the next Successor (who demanded no such court) particularly those relating to the

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house

house of Commons and the Privy Council, of which more amply another time : and thus, to support the exorbitant power of one or two who impolitickly oppos'd the bringing over any of the HANOVER-family, and who were far enough God knows from being Whigs, they undermin'd the Constitution so lately re-establisht by themselves. Next, let those Tories be for ever abhorr'd, who, like hungry dogs, return to their vomit again, by madly offering up both Laws and Liberty to the arbitrary will of any mortal, tho the best of Kings or Queens : ungratefully vilifying the immortal memory of King WILLIAM, who rescu'd the Church out of imminent danger ; and encouraging the pretences of a French-minted Impostor, who owes a severe revenge to the dethroners of his suppos'd Father. But, above all and for the sake of all, let those Priests be condemn'd to abstinence and humility (a punishment to them more dreadful

ful than infamy or death) who impiously teach, that neither our Religion nor Laws are worth maintaining or fighting for, by pronouncing it damnation to resist when these are manifestly violated, and exhorting us to be obediently passive, when our very lives and properties are invaded by a Tyrant: herein not consistent with their own Actions, nor with the Church of England, nor with any other Church in the world. From these mercenaries however the danger is not great, for he that sitteth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn, and the Land shall hold them in derision; particularly when they fall into the pit they are now so maliciously digging for others. Have they so soon forgot? — what may sooner return than they imagine. — In the mean time, from such Whigs, from such Tories, and from such Priests, good Lord deliver us: but let the wise and well-meaning, the able and honest of all these denominations

nominations, heartily join together
 to carry on the publick cause, and
 mutually bear with one another's in-
 curable differences or infirmities, be-
 coming in this last respect perfect IN-
 TERPENDENTS. Let free-born
 Brittons be the common designation
 for the future; and no distinction be
 known among us, but only of such
 as are for civil Liberty, Toleration,
 and the Protestant succession, and of
 such others as are for absolute Slave-
 ry, Persecution, and the Popish pre-
 tender. A just indignation at our
 senseless quarrels has extorted this
 Censure, like some Episode in a Po-
 em. But (that I may not digress too
 farr, tho in a place where you may
 ramble long enough without fearing
 to lose your way) I am pritty sure
 I shall be forgiven this transport for
 unity by our Governor himself. So
 we usually call, MADAM, a Gentle-
 man of our Society here, that for good
 humor, good breeding, and good
 living, is esteem'd by all those who
 possess

possess or understand these qualities. He's a profest enemy to all party-disputes, he's the arbiter of all differences; and in promoting the interest of this town, which he has frequented for many years, 'tis plain that he looks upon virtue as its own reward. His choice of the place is of a piece with his judgment in every thing: for as England is the plentifullest country on earth, so no part of it is supply'd with more diversity of the best provisions, both from within it self and from the adjacent villages, than EPSOM. The nearness of London does in like manner afford it all the exotick preparatives and allurements to luxury, whenever any is dispos'd to make a sumptuous banquet, or to give a genteel collation. You wou'd think your self in some enchanted Camp, to see the peasants ride to every house with the choicest fruits, herbs, roots, and flowers, with all sorts of tame and wild fowl, with the rarest fish and
veni-

venison, and with every kind of butcher's meat, among which Bansted-down mutton is the most relishing dainty. Thus to see the fresh and artless damsels of the plain, either accompany'd by their amorous swains or aged parents, striking their bargains with the nice Court and City Ladies, who, like Queens in a Tragedy, display all their finery on benches before their doors (where they hourly censure, and are censur'd) and to observe, how the handsomest of each degree equally admire, envy, and cozen one another, is to me one of the chief amusements of the place. The Ladies who are too lazy or too stately, but especially those that sit up late at play, have their provisions brought to their bedside, where they conclude the bargain; and then (perhaps after a dish of Chocolate) take t'other nap, till what they have thus bought is got ready for dinner. Yet these rounds of the Haglers (which I wou'd have
by

by no means abolish'd) are not incompatible with a daily Market in the middle of the town, not only as a further entertainment for the Ladies, who love occasions of coming together; but likewise because a greater choice of every thing may be had there, and at all hours, than possibly can be at their doors: nor wou'd it be more advantageous to the meaner sort for cheapness, than convenient for the neighbouring Gentry on many accounts. The new fair during the Easter holy-days, and that on the twenty fourth of July, are as yet of little moment, tho capable in time to be highly improv'd. So much for the Town. Nor is my pleasure diminish'd by excursions out of it: for no where has Nature indulg'd her self in grateful variety, more than in this Canton. The old Wells at half a mile's distance, which formerly us'd to be the meeting place in the forenoon, are not at present so much in vogue; the waters, they

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say, being found as good within the
 village, and all diversions in greater
 perfection. The view from the fer-
 til Common in which they ly, is,
 as from every elevation hereabouts,
 wonderfully delightful; especially so
 distinct a prospect of London at so
 great a distance. But the fortuitous
 cure of a leprous shepherd (an ori-
 gine attributed to these in common
 with other such Wells) appears even
 hence to be fabulous, that they have
 never since had the like effect: tho
 otherwise these aluminous waters are
 experienc'd to be very beneficial in
 gently cleansing the body, in cooling
 and purifying the blood, the salt
 that is chymically made of 'em be-
 ing famous over all Europe. Yet
 the cold Bath, lately erected on the
 bottom of this pretended miracle,
 meets with as little encouragement,
 as the old story it self does with be-
 lief; it not being the fashion in this,
 as in some other countries, to have
 all salutiferous waters under the in-
 spec-

spection of the parson, or the protection of a saint. The hunting of a pig there every monday morning, when the only knack consists in catching and holding him up by the tail, is infinitely more becoming the boys that perform it, than the spectators that employ 'em. As for a cold Bath, Ewell wou'd by much be the properest place; since, by reason of the spring, the water may not only be chang'd for every new comer, but a basin be likewise made adapted for swimming, which on such occasions was the practice of the antients. But to shift our scenes: from the Ring on the most eminent part of the Downs, where I have often counted above sixty coaches on a sunday evening, and whence the painter must take his view when he represents EPSOM, you may distinctly see nine or ten counties in whole or in part. Besides the Imperial city of London, very many considerable towns, and an infinite number of

country-seats, you also see the two Royal palaces of Windsor and Hampton-Court. Within a mile and a half is the place where that other splendid palace of Nonsuch lately stood: a fit subject of reflection for those, who are inclin'd to moralize on the frailty, uncertainty, and vicissitude of all things. The great number of Gentlemen and Ladies, that take the air every evening and morning on horseback, and that range either singly or in separate companies over every hill and dale, is a most entertaining object. You can never miss of it on the fine grounds of the new orbicular Race, which may well be term'd a rural Cirque. The four-mile course over the Warrenhouse to Carshalton, a village abounding in delicious springs as much as we want 'em, seldom likewise fails to afford me this pleasure: having all the way in my eye (like some cynosure) the tufted trees of the old Roman fortification Burrough, properly

ly situated to crown the Downs, and once in my opinion reigning over all the groves. I except not that of Durdans famous for Love, nor even Ashsted-mount the mansion of the Graces. Sutton and Cheam, if not too low, are yet too dirty; as Walton and Hedly are too windy in winter, too woody, and therefore too close, in summer. This I insert for your information, noblest **CHERUSCUS**, to whom I'm confident **EUDOXIA** will communicate this letter; since you have wisely resolv'd (as you do every thing) to purchase a summer retreat, cost what it will, somewhere in this neighborhood. But whether you gently step over my favorite Meadows, planted on all sides quite to Woodcot-seat, in whose long grove I ofteneft converse with my self: or that you walk further on to Ashsted-house and Park, the sweetest spot of ground in our British world: or ride still further to the enchanting prospect of Box-hill, that

that temple of Nature, no where else to be equall'd for affording so surprizing and magnificent an idea both of heaven and earth: whether you lose your self in the aged yew-groves of Mickle-ham, as the river Mole dos hide it self in the Swallows beneath, or that you had rather try your patience in angling for trouts about Leatherhead: whether you go to some Cricket-match and other prizes of contending villagers, or chuse to breath your horse at a Race, and to follow a pack of hounds in the proper season: whether, I say, you delight in any or every one of these, EPSOM is the place you must like before all others. I that love the country entirely, and to partake in some measure of most diversions (except gaming) have fixt my residence here, where I continue the whole summer, and whither I withdraw frequently in winter. Nor are these I now nam'd my only inducements: for as I prefer Retirement

ment to Solitude, and so wou'd have it in my power to be alone or in company at pleasure, I cou'd be nowhere better fitted besides ; every body meeting his acquaintance on the Bowling-greens, in the Coffee-houses, or on the Downs, and few visiting others at their houses unless particularly invited, or where friendship has made all things common. 'Tis otherwise among themselves with chance-lodgers, who come purely for diversion. In two or three hours time I can be at London, whenever I will, at my ease ; and, if I have no business in town, I can receive all the publick news as well, and almost as soon, at EPSOM : several stage-coaches going and returning every day, with town and country waggons more than once a week, not to mention the ordinary post. Here then, EUDOXIA, let me have Books and Bread enough without Dependance, a bottle of Hermitage and a plate of
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of Olives for a select Friend, with an early Rose to present a young Lady, as an emblem of discretion no less than of beauty; and I ingloriously resign (from that minute) my share of all titles and preferments to such as are in love with hurry, pay court to envy, or divert themselves with care, to such as are content to square their lives by the smiles or frowns of others, and who are resolv'd to live poor that they may die rich. Let some therefore hide their aking scars under laurels, or raise estates to their children by ruining their clients, or squander the gettings of their fathers in corrupting elections against their country, while others kill whom they can't cure, or preach what they don't believe: but grant me, ye powers, luxurious Tranquillity!

You have here (MADAM) the description that you demanded of EPSOM, and my reasons for liking
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ing the place. But the main attractive is still unsaid. I have other Mistresses that charm me in the neighborhood, beside those which may be gain'd with some address and pains in a town so well stockt with beauties. I make no question but you'll presently think, I mean the lonely Shepherdesses on the wide downs, or the plain farmers daughters as they go to hay-making, to harvest, a nutting, a milking, or perhaps to turn in or out their harmless cattle: amours that Gods and Heroes have not disdain'd. This, I repeat it, will be your first thought, which wou'd be uncivil in me to contradict. But I know your next reflection will be, that I allude to the nine Muses, which meet me in every lawn and every grove, in every shady bower and solitary glade. Minerva is to be met on our Downs as well as Diana: and if ever I go a hunting, 'tis always (as a learned Roman has recorded of himself) with a pocket-book and a

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pencil,

pencil, that if I happen to take nothing, I may yet bring something home. Nor is this all. To us lovers of the country, the lowing of oxen, the bleating of sheep, the piping of shepherds, and the whistling of hinds, are charms for which the men of noise and business, with the men of pleasure falsely so call'd, have neither taste nor ear. O refreshing Zephirs, bearing odors and spices on your wings, sweeter than all artificial perfumes! O ye wild fruits and berries, ye tender buds and fragrant flowers, cropt with my own hands, preferable to the repasts of Bishops! O cooling shades and grotts, ye retir'd caves, mossy springs, and awful woods! ye spacious plains, ecchoing valleys, and majestick hills, far more pleasant than the welknown Courts of Princes! I call you all to witness, that, tir'd with sport or study, and sleeping on the grass under a spreading beech, I enjoy not a more solid and secure Repose, than the proudest
mo-

monarch in his gilded Palace? In such places, MADAM (if I dare flatter my self that I am sometimes happy in your remembrance) you'll imagine to see me wandring as void of care as of ambition, and always a book in my hand or in my head: yet still with a design of returning more entertaining to private conversation, or more serviceable to publick Society. But wherever I am, or however employ'd, you may depend upon it (and I know you'll generously do so) that as none is higher in my esteem, so none is oftener in my thoughts, than the every way incomparable EUDOXIA. Of this the consciousness of her own worth assures her: and therefore 'tis purely form obliges me to add, that with a zeal and sincerity not possible to be express'd, I am,

MADAM,
Your most faithful, obedient,
and devoted servant,
BRITTO-BATAVUS.

POSTSCRIPT.

I forgot to tell you, MADAM,
that we have pray'rs on Wednesdays
and Fridays, and two Sermons eve-
ry Sunday, not to speak (unless a-
mong friends) of a Dissenting Meet-
ing-house.

MADAM,
Your most faithful, obedient,
and devoted son,
BRITTO-BATARS

A Specimen of LETTERS
out of PLINY.

S I R,

Epsom, Aug. 4. 1711.

IF you had as much amusement in reading, as I had in writing the Description of Epsom, I can for once forgive your compliments, and so will answer your three questions. The old Saxon name of this place was EBBISHEIM, which is to say E.BBA's home or palace, afterwards Ebbesham and Ebs-ham, the pronounciation of this last word occasioning the present name of EPSOM. I am not the first, as you intimate, that made Burrough a Roman fortress; for if you look into Dr. Gale's posthumous edition of Antonin's Itinerary, you'll find there were Roman garisons not only at Burrough (call'd by the Saxons Burgh from the old fort) but likewise at Gatton, Bensbury, Wimbledon, and such other advantageous posts near the city NOVIOMAGUM on Woodcote-warren, whereof there are yet to be seen considerable remains, as Roman coins, tiles, several deep wells, and, as he says, the vestiges of the very streets, which I shall soon examine. As for your complaining, that of all country enjoyments I have past over or but slightly mention'd Agriculture, the principal and the best; be pleas'd to understand, that my silence on
this

this subject is not the effect of forgetfulness, but of express deliberation, having engag'd to furnish EUDOXIA with one hour's entertainment more out of Surry, where Art and Improvement will bear as great a share, as Nature did in the other. But something that concerns her interest nearer than her pleasure employs me at present: and so you must be content (till I regain my dear leisure) with these few Letters I send you out of PLINY, as a specimen of the Translation I am making of the whole. For what they call a happy turn, delicacy of expression, and speaking only to the business in hand, I think no modern comes near him, no more than in the variety of his subjects, such as intrigues of state, points of literature and history, questions in natural philosophy, rural pleasures, the concerns of his friends, and some trifles which he renders important. The short Notes I shall add at the foot of every page will justify my Translation, which I endeavour to make as concise as his Latin, not comparable indeed with that of CICERO, but nothing behind him in sense or matter. I conclude as he does in one of his letters, that I give you this account (Sir) because our mutual friendship requires you shou'd not only be made acquainted with all my words and actions, but even with my designs. Farewell.

To

To Caninius Rufus.

Lib. 1. Ep. 3.

How fares Comum, my delight
 and yours? that country-seat
 so exceeding lovely? that gallery,
 where 'tis always spring? that most
 shady grove of plane-trees, that ca-
 nal, so green and clear as a diamond?
 the lake hard by, which seems design'd
 for a reservatory to supply it? those
 firm and yet easy walks? that bath
 which never wants the sun in his
 round? those large dining rooms
 for company, and those lesser with-
 drawing rooms for a few friends?
 how goes it with the drinking
 rooms? how with those bedchambers
 for night, and those antichambers
 for day? Do these possess and share
 you by turns? or are you hinder'd
 (as you were wont) with frequent ex-
 cursions abroad, by an over-earnest
 desire of encreasing your estate? If
 these possess you, then are you easy
 and

and happy: but if they do not, you are only one of many that admire 'em. Why do you not rather (for it is high time) commit those low and sordid cares to others, and apply yourself to books in that quiet and plentiful retreat? let this be your business and leisure, your labor and recreation: let studies employ your thoughts by day, and be the subject of your dreams by night. Invent and finish something, that may be perpetually yours: for the rest of your possessions will, after your death, successively fall to the share of many owners; but if this once begins, it can never cease to be yours. I know how great a soul, and how fine a genius I exhort. Do you only endeavour to have as good an opinion of your self, as others must needs entertain of you, if once you are conscious of your own worth. Farewell.

To

To Minutius Fundantus.

Lib. 1. Ep. 10.

Tis a wonderful thing how reasonably we act, or at least seem to act, in the city upon particular days; but not so every day, nor many days together. For if you ask any one, *what have you been doing to day?* and that he answers, *I was to congratulate with a friend for his Son's arriving to Man's estate, I was present at a contract or a wedding, one call'd me to be a witness to his will, another to assist him in a law-suit, another to have my advice in some other matter:* these things will just then seem necessary offices; but, if consider'd as done every day, they must appear to be pure losing of time, and you'll be convinc'd of it much more when you retire into the country. For then I call to mind, how many days I have spent in most trivial affairs; which reflection I especially have, when, in my Laurentin villa, I read any thing, or write, or even take care of my body, the prop and sup-
G
port

port of the mind. There I hear nothing of which I wou'd chuse to be ignorant, nor speak any thing I wish unsaid again. No body detracts from me at another man's table by malicious discourses, and I find fault with no body but only with my self, when I can't write to my mind. I am perplex'd with no fears, I am not disquieted with any reports: I speak only with my self and with my books. O upright and sincere life! O sweet and honourable leisure! preferable (I had almost said) to any business whatsoever! O Sea! O Shore! you true and private studying-place! how many things you dictate to me? how many things you occasion me to invent? Do you therefore, as soon as ever you can, leave that noise, those vain prattles, with all the pains you are at to so little purpose, and betake your self to study or recreation: since 'tis better (as our friend Atilius has no less learnedly than facetiously said) for a man to be idle than to be busy in doing nothing. Farewell.

To

To Caninius. Lib. 2. Ep. 8.

Do you study? or go a fishing? or ride a hunting? or do all these together? since our Larius gives you an opportunity for 'em all: for this lake affords plenty of fish, the woods that surround it game, and that most profound retreat study. But whether you follow 'em all or any one thing, I cannot say I envy you: nevertheless 'tis a torment to me that I cannot likewise enjoy those things, for which I long with as much ardor as feverish persons do for wine, or baths, or fountains. Shall I never be able to break, if I cannot dissolve, these intolerable bonds? I think I never shall. For fresh businesses throng on the back of the old, before these are quite finish'd: and the weight of my affairs is encreas'd upon me every day, like an addition of so many cords and chains. Farewell.

To Maximus. Lib. 7. Ep. 26.

I was lately convinc'd by the indisposition of a friend, that we are
best

best when we are sick : for what sick person is disturb'd with avarice or lust? he pursues no amours, he covets no honours, he neglects riches, and, let him leave but ever so little behind him, he has enough. Then he believes there are Gods, and remembers himself to be a man. He envies no body, he admires no body, he despises no body, neither is he curious to hear or is pleas'd even with scandal. His thoughts are wholly set on baths and fountains. The top of his cares, the top of his wishes is, that, after escaping his distemper, he may become sleek and plump : which is to say, that he resolves to lead an innocent and happy life for the future. What the Philosophers therefore endeavour to teach in many words, nay in many volumes, I can thus briefly prescribe to you and my self; that when we are well, we continue to be such, as we profess our selves resolv'd to be, when we are sick. Farewell.

F I N I S.



